



No mobile
phones

WHILE DRIVING

MOBILE PHONE RECYCLING APPEAL

ARCO'S MOBILE PHONE INITIATIVE A SAFER WAY TO KEEP IN TOUCH

"This is a good example of leadership in action. A company whose business is health and safety needs to lead by example with its own workforce".

Judith Hackitt, Chair, Health and Safety Executive

A Safer Way to Keep in Touch

Since December 2003 it has been illegal in the UK to use a hand-held mobile phone while driving. But some recent studies have shown that people using hands-free phones while driving are just as likely to have a car crash as those using hand-held phones.¹

In light of this, Arco, the UK's leading supplier of safety clothing and equipment, has launched a new initiative which is committed to providing a safe working environment for its staff at all times. From the 30th March, Arco employees were banned from using mobile phones and associated hands free technology whilst driving on company business to ensure their safety.

The ban covers all mobile phone usage whilst driving on company business. The new mobile phone ban aims to improve the safety of Arco's employees and others around them whilst driving on company business and promotes *a safer way to keep in touch*.

As part of the wider impact of this initiative, Arco is encouraging its customers, suppliers and business partners to consider introducing a similar mobile phone ban. This leaflet has been compiled to demonstrate how Arco has researched and delivered this initiative and how easy it is for other businesses to consider a similar adoption.

Implementation

Arco carried out a variety of activities in order to ensure smooth implementation of the mobile phone initiative including the following:

- Research behind the statistics driving the initiative

¹ Just MA, Keller TA, Cynkar J. A decrease in brain activation associated with driving when listening to someone speak. Brain Research. 2008.



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- Field based trials on alternative forms of communication
- Review of customer communication prior to the ban
- Development of plans to ensure little or no disruption to staff and customers as the ban was implemented
- Development of a communication programme to promote the introduction of the ban

Considerations

The key considerations for the effective launch of this initiative were:

- Improving the safety and well being of Arco's employees and other road users
- Ensuring effective communications both internally and externally
- Securing employee buy-in and commitment
- Assuring external customers and contacts that an alternative communication strategy is being implemented to maintain excellent customer service levels
- Incorporate CSR initiative by launching a mobile phone recycling programme through Arco regional trade counters

New Communications – Field Based Trials

Before the ban was implemented, the company undertook a trial involving 20 field-based members of the sales team. During this trial, the company tested five mobile phone options assessing a number of features including screen size, battery life, web browsing and email capability and affordability. The results of the trial indicated that the Nokia E71 phone with email and web connectivity was the best choice. Use of this phone, tied in to laptops for improved off-line contact, enabled Arco's IT department to introduce a mobile e-mail solution for all account managers, so that their time could be used more productively.

Customer Impact

In order to avoid any disruption in customer service levels, the company introduced a new customer contact strategy for field based employees who spend long periods in their car visiting customers. Calls are now diverted to alternative team members who will be able to answer immediate enquiries. This ensures that customers continue to receive excellent service from Arco while employees stay safe.



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If driving or unavailable for more than an hour, account managers forward calls to their local branch, to a specific extension so that the customer enquiry can be dealt with, rather than the customer having to leave a message.

If driving or unavailable for less than an hour, account managers switch their phones to voicemail and leave a pre-agreed recorded message asking the caller to either leave a message or send an email. The account manager then deals with this enquiry as soon as he/she is free.

Communications

The introduction of the ban required a dedicated communications plan in order to engage with Arco's various audiences: employees, customers, partners & suppliers, key influencers and stakeholders.

Internally, the HR department issued a new 'Use of Mobile Phones Whilst Driving' policy and produced a FAQ document for all staff.

Externally, customers received a mailing explaining the ban and the ways in which Arco intended to maintain excellent communication channels once the ban was in place. Account Managers supported this with 121 briefings with their own contacts and Branch Managers disseminated information to branch staff and local account customers.

Thought Leadership

The introduction of this initiative presented an opportunity for Arco to be recognized among its peers for its dedication to "making work a better place for people" and introducing unique and innovative ways of doing this. Judith Hackitt, Chair, Health and Safety Executive said: **"This is a good example of leadership in action. A company whose business is health and safety needs to lead by example with its own workforce"**. Arco promoted this with a mailing campaign to key influencers in the health and safety industry, Government and other related professional bodies.



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PR Opportunities

According to environmental resource Green Uses for Waste, it is estimated that there are nearly 90 million unused mobile phones hiding in drawers and cupboards across the UK alone. More surprisingly, only 20% of all unused mobile phones in the UK are recycled.

As part of its campaign to highlight safe use of mobile phones and in line with Arco's CSR strategy, the company introduced recycling bins to its 39 branches across the UK and at its head office and National Distribution Centre in Hull, to encourage its customers and the local community to recycle their unused or unwanted mobile phones.

This initiative was publicised through a regional and local PR campaign, giving the company an opportunity to promote its presence in the local area and increase awareness of its range of products and services.

The money raised from the mobile phone recycling will be donated to the Jo Martin Cancer Care ² Trust. This money will contribute to the much needed funds for cancer research.

What Can You Do?

If you are interested in finding out about how you could deliver a similar programme to help make your workplace a safer place, then please visit www.arco.co.uk for more information.

² Jo Martin, who died last year age 39, was Arco's Joint Managing Director and a strong advocate for the power of business to benefit the community.